

# How Torrance Aids Gifted Students

## City 8 Years in Advance Of State in Program

By RONNIE SAUNDERS  
Women's Editor

**Editor's Note:** The following is the third in a series of articles concerning high school curriculum in Torrance. Earlier articles discussed English and Social Science courses. Today's deals with Advanced Placement of students. Material was gathered during an interview with R. D. Guengerich, principal of North High School.

Within the past year, the state of California allotted funds for a school enrichment program aimed at students in the top bracket of standardized intelligence tests.

The purpose of the program was to give schools throughout the state funds with which to broaden their curriculum so that they could challenge and stimulate gifted students to their fullest possible potential.

On the high school level, Torrance had an eight-year start in such a program.

Advanced placement at North High School began in 1955 when a conversation between an elementary and a high school principal resulted in an opportunity for a handful of academically-talented students to sit in for an hour a day on a high school class in science, or math, or to participate in the high school band or orchestra.

**EXTRA CLASSES** program was on an individual basis. In time, it extended and became formalized as the advanced placement program and spread to other high schools in the city.

When school opened last fall, there were 36 elementary pupils from schools in the North High district who were enrolled in algebra, German, Spanish, science, orchestra, and Senior band.

Most of the elementary students studying at North High are taking 8 a.m. classes at the high school campus before beginning their regular school day at 9 a.m.

A more flexible, more inclusive program than the state program for mentally gifted minors, the enrichment program here on the high school level supplements California's program. In addition to the 36 elementary pupils studying at North High, five Seniors are doing college work this year and more than 50 students are participating in the seventh period day.

**SEVEN PERIOD DAY** The seventh-period day is a program which permits those who take part to take an extra class at the end of the school day to earn extra credit.

Students who might not otherwise have an opportunity to take a fourth year of German, or play in the school band, are enabled to include these activities in their schedule by taking part in the seventh-period day.

Another phase of the enrichment program is summer school. Academically-talented students who demonstrate ability in tests even in the seventh grade may, if they choose, take summer school classes on the high school campus.

It is possible to go to high school two summers before the Freshman year — the summer between the seventh and eighth grade, and the summer between the eighth grade and Freshman year.

The purpose is to broaden the educational experience. It gives the student an opportunity for more elective subjects during the high school years. Math and science students are enabled to get in their fine arts, or and extra

### DO COLLEGE WORK

Perhaps the most unique phase of the advanced placement program concerns those high school Seniors who are doing college work.

Four students from North High School are presently taking courses at El Camino College, and one student is enrolled on a full-time basis at the University of Southern California.

Inaugurated in 1958, the El Camino program is designed to enrich rather than to accelerate the high school student's achievement.

Would-be participants are screened by an academic program committee which evaluates the student's capacity for carrying an extra load. The goal of the committee is to offer challenge to students who have ability, without burdening youngsters who might find the added responsibility too much of a chore.

Each student involved takes one course during the regular school day at El Camino. They are expected to maintain A's and B's, both in their high school courses and in their college class.

Periodically, the high school counselors meet individually with the students' El Camino instructors to find out how they are doing. Prior to the counseling session, the instructors are not aware that their students are high school Seniors.

**MAKE GOOD GRADES** To date, all students have maintained excellent grades. Secret of the success of the program, according to R. D. Guengerich, North High principal, is the screening of applicants.

Currently representing North High School at El Camino are: Elias (Bud) Baumgarten, who is studying history; Sinclair Cleveland, math student; Peter Gregora, history; and Naomi Narimatsu, math.

Enrolled as a full-time student at USC, where he is one of 25 students from the entire Los Angeles area participating in a pilot program for high school Seniors, is Irvin Lee McClendon. He will receive his high school diploma from North High School at commencement in June.

David Lippman underwent a similar experience last year.

In the USC program, the high school student lives in a dormitory and takes a special program of studies. He gets regular college credit for that part of his work which is not needed toward his high school diploma. A scholarship covers tuition, but the student provides part of his room and board.

**What are the results of the opportunities Torrance has provided its academically-talented high school students?**

"The high school years have offered a rich, broad base of academic experience beyond the basic requirements which have challenged the abilities of our talented students and provided them with opportunities to exercise those talents," according to Guengerich.



**THEY ARE IN HIGH SCHOOL** but they go to college. Seated from left to right are Peter Gregora, of 17220 Elgar; and Naomi Narimatsu, of 17040 Spinning; standing, from left, are Mike Jones, 3844 W. 171st St.; Elias (Bud) Baumgarten, of 423 W. 176th St.,

and their Senior Counseling Advisor, J. H. Blue. Pete and Bud take history; Naomi, math, and Mike, political science. Bud and Lee McClendon, who goes to USC and is not in the picture, are tied for first honors in their class with 4.0, the highest possible grade.



**OUR CONSTITUTION** was the subject of Sherre Farmer, of 4602 Mayor Drive, Torrance, winner of the annual American Legion Oratorical Contest sponsored by Post 170, Torrance, and held at West High School. A four-to-six minute extempore talk also was given by the contestants on the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of religion, press, speech, assembly and petition, to the people of the United States. Three other local high students took part: John Michael Rose, of Bishop Montgomery; Judy Morgan, of North High; and Harry Howell of West High. Sherre is the daughter of Mrs. Esther Farmer. —PRESS photo



**\$500 PRIZE-WINNER**, Tom Adkens, 17, 131 Via Los Miradores, represented Torrance in the competition for Hi-Y Boy of the Year among all metropolitan Los Angeles YMCAs and was awarded second place. The money will be used to further Tom's education. Tom goes to South High and he was judged on his grades and student activities as well as those in the YMCA. —PRESS photo

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### OIL HEAT

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—Mary Baker Eddy

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### VETERAN POPULATION

By the year 2000, the veteran population is expected to consist of 5,220,000 World War II vets; 3,435,000 of the Korean War; and 2,000 World War I veterans.

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## Children's Theater Casting Begins Feb. 9 at Rec. Center

A children's Theater will be formed in Torrance, with the first production, "The Emperor's New Clothes," set for May 18, according to Harry B. Van Bellehem, director of recreation.

The program follows the completion of a \$150,000 recreation center, opened last month near the Torrance Civic Center, which will be the headquarters for the youth drama workshop.

to the stage by Charlotte Chorpennig. Casting will be held at 1 p.m., Feb. 9, in the Recreation Center, 3341 Torrance Blvd. John Lankford is director. Children from 9 to 18 years of age are eligible.

**SPANISH-AMERICAN** Spanish - American War Veterans, now about 24,000 strong, will be gone from the American scene by 1987, or 1988, barring a handful of long-lived men.